ECLIPSE COMICS
No. 3 $1.50
$2 CANADA
AXEL
PREJUDICE
"THE ZERO GRAVITY DEATH TRAP!"
Angel Davis

The PENUMBRA

ECLIPSE COMICS • P. O. BOX 199 • GUERNEVILLE, CALIFORNIA 95446

ON THE RACKS

AZTEC ACE no. 10

Doug Moench, Dan Day and Ron Harris tell the bloody tale of Jack the Ripper's journey back in time to become Tezcatlipoca, Aztec "Lord of the Smoking Mirror," slayer of maidens.

NIGHT MUSIC no. 2

Dreams are the subject of this issue, and P. Craig Russell shows us the full range — from the darkest nightmares of "The Insomniac" to the beautiful fantasies of "La Sonnambula."

MASKED MAN no. 2

The Masked Man learns "The Secret of Maggie Brown," tries to solve a case of "Mistaken Identity," and battles "Mad Dog McCain" in this trio of tales by B.C. Boyer.

STRANGE DAYS no. 2

The Drifter meets deeper madness in "Freakwave;" Johnny Nemo tries to score unlawful ice; and Paradax fights his first foe, V.2 Pinhead! Milligan, Ewins, and McCarthy feed your brain!

LOTSA PROJECTS: Things are really cooking around the office these days. Planning for 1985's new releases has been our top priority all month. Most of the news will be covered in the fanzines, of course, and you'll be able to see advance art along with detailed descriptions of what's in store when you pick up the next couple of issues of **ECLIPSE EXTRA** at your local retail shop. . . but just now, while everything is still buzzing around in my head, seems like a good time to reveal a few scoops, minus the hype and straight from the drawing board to you:

KILLER TALES BY TIMOTHY TRUMAN is a one-shot collection of old and new work by the man who brings you Grimjack. Under a fantastic cover painting of Ares the war god, you'll find a brand new story Tim drew with script by all-time comics great Gardner Fox. This barbarian tale, called "Daral," had at one time been announced for inclusion in a Pacific Comics title, and negotiating to pick it up in the wake of Pacific's demise is what led us to discover that Tim Truman had some fine black-and-white stories on hand that he drew years ago for TSR (the gaming company). These appear now for the first time in colour and for a larger audience. Look for **KILLER** in April.

ALIEN ENCOUNTERS and **TALES OF TERROR** are the names we've chosen for the science fiction and horror anthology books which will replace **ALIEN WORLDS** and **TWISTED TALES** on our schedule. (For those who came in late, Bruce Jones and April Campbell are taking their leave of the comics industry, and since they own the titles of their books, these too will depart.) Rest assured, though, that **ALIEN ENCOUNTERS** and **TALES OF TERROR** will represent our best efforts to follow in Bruce and April's shoes. . . and look for artwork in the new books by the same fine folks who've been thrilling and chilling you all along.

"MARVELMAN" PRICE BREAKTHROUGH!: When Eclipse brings you the adventures of the award-winning British hero, Marvelman (by Alan Moore, Garry Leach and Alan Davis) this summer, you'll not only be able to pick up on one of the best-ever superhero series in comics, you'll also be able to take advantage of the first real price breakthrough the Independent Publishers have offered to date. Yes, Eclipse is going to break the One Dollar Barrier: the adventures of Marvelman will be yours — in colour, on Mando-grade paper — for only SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS! (You're welcome!) Of course, for an experiment like this to work, Eclipse is going to have to sell a lot of copies, and that means we're counting on YOU to help by telling your dealer that you'll be buying a copy when it comes out. (Thanks!)

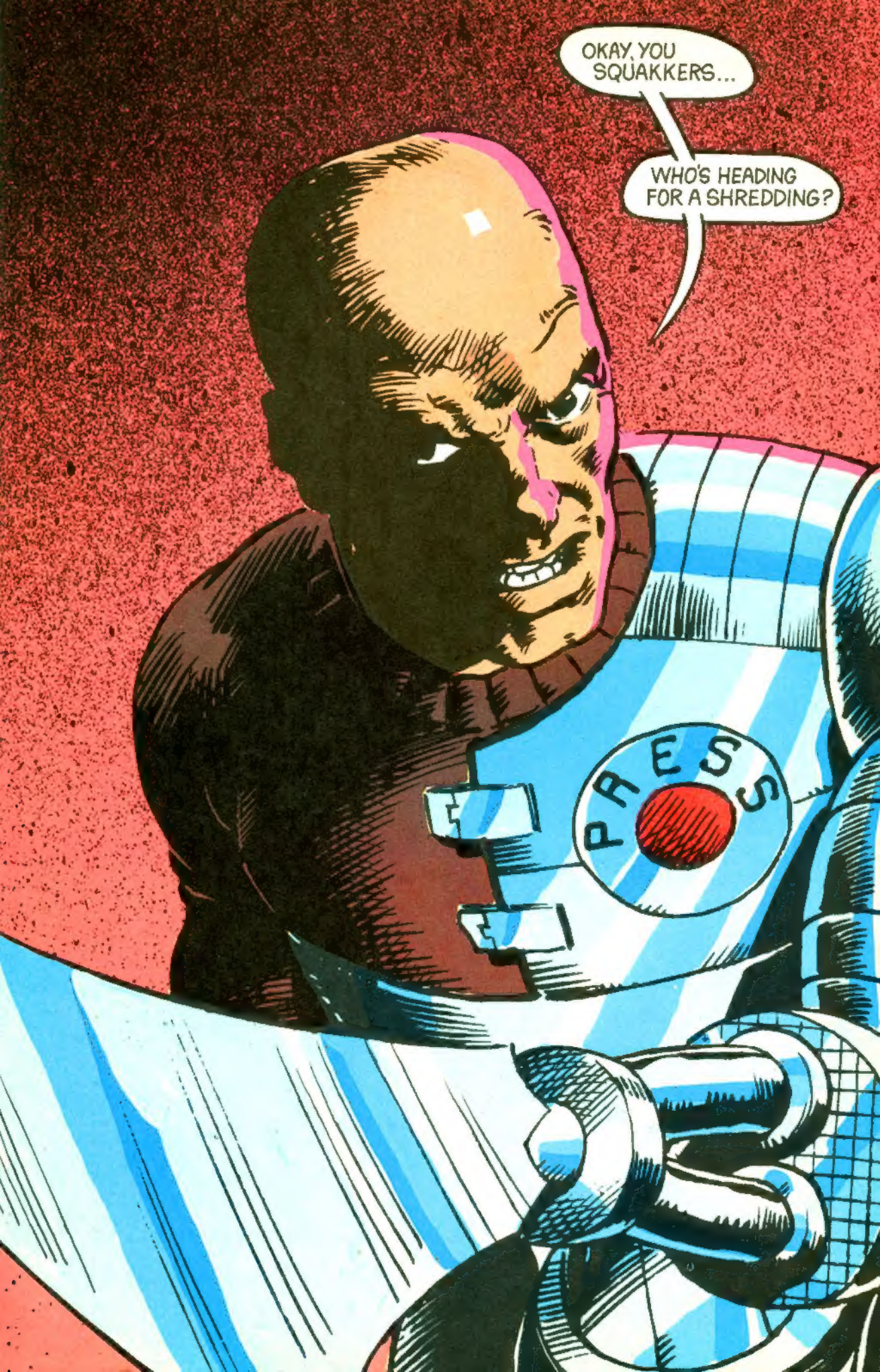
BOOKS IN BRIEF: After more delays than one might like, two Eclipse books are (finally) back on the schedule for Spring. Look for **WOMEN AND THE COMICS**, a history of women cartoonists from 1890 to the present, and **THE ART OF STEVE DITKO**, a look at the work of one of comics' most important artist-creators.

catherine yronwode

IN YOUR HANDS

Mysta Mystralis and Axel Pressbutton have been tricked into committing an unlicensed laser-erasure and are on the lam from the law. The man who framed them is Donthax, the same man who had Mysta cloned from the long-dead tissues of the fabled warrior, Ektryn, who raised and trained her — and who woke one morning to find that she had killed his entire cadre of assassins. And now: the final confrontation!

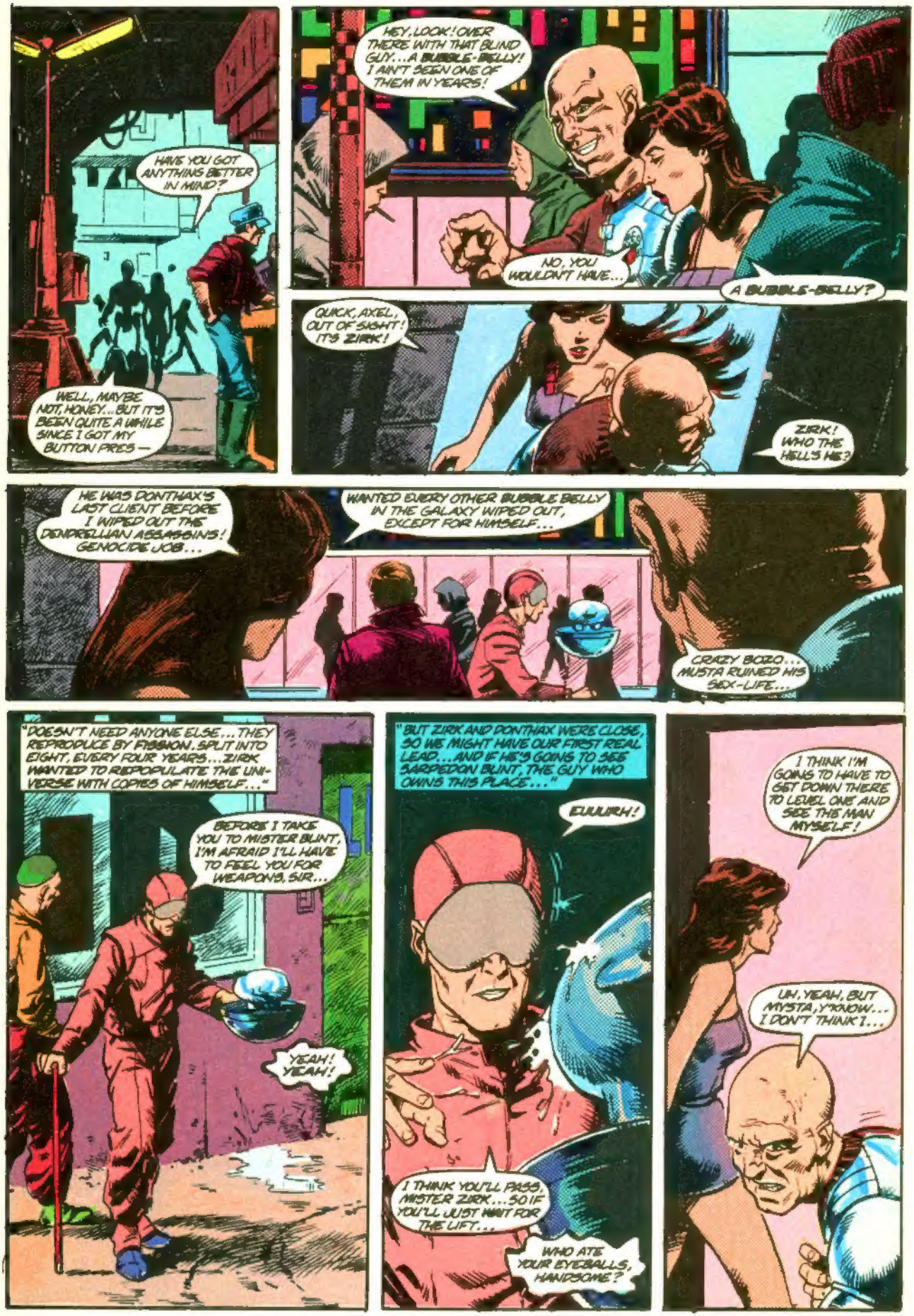
AXEL PRESSBUTTON no. 3. February 1985. Published by Eclipse Comics, P.O. Box 199, Guerneville, CA 95446. Dez Skinn, Editor. Pressbutton TM and © 1985 P Henry/S. Dillon/Quality. All other material © the respective creators. All rights reserved. The stories, characters, events and places in this magazine are entirely fictional. Printed in Canada.

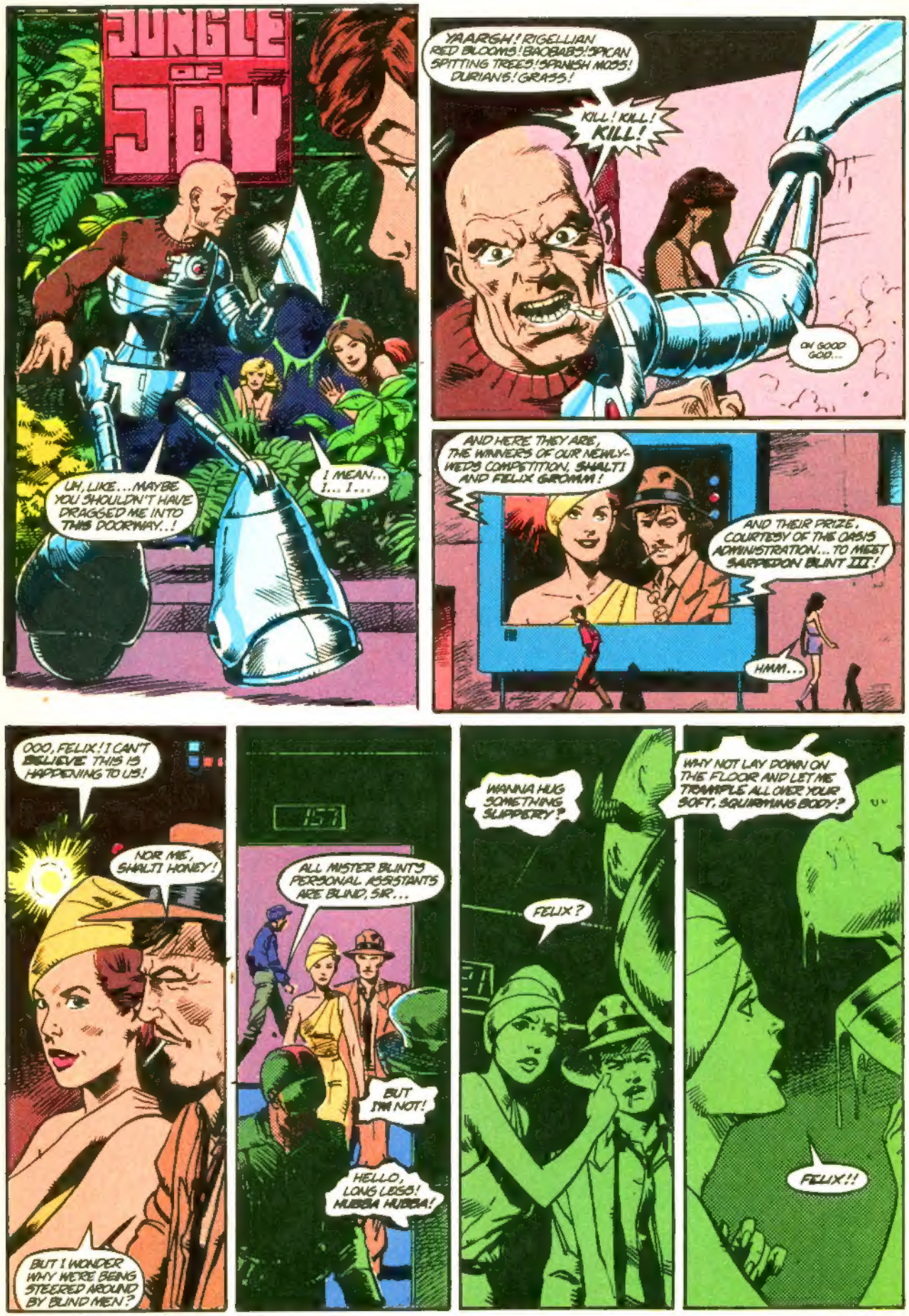

OKAY, YOU SQUAKKERS...
WHO'S HEADING FOR A SHREDDING?
PRESS

© P. Henry/S. Dillon/Quality Communications

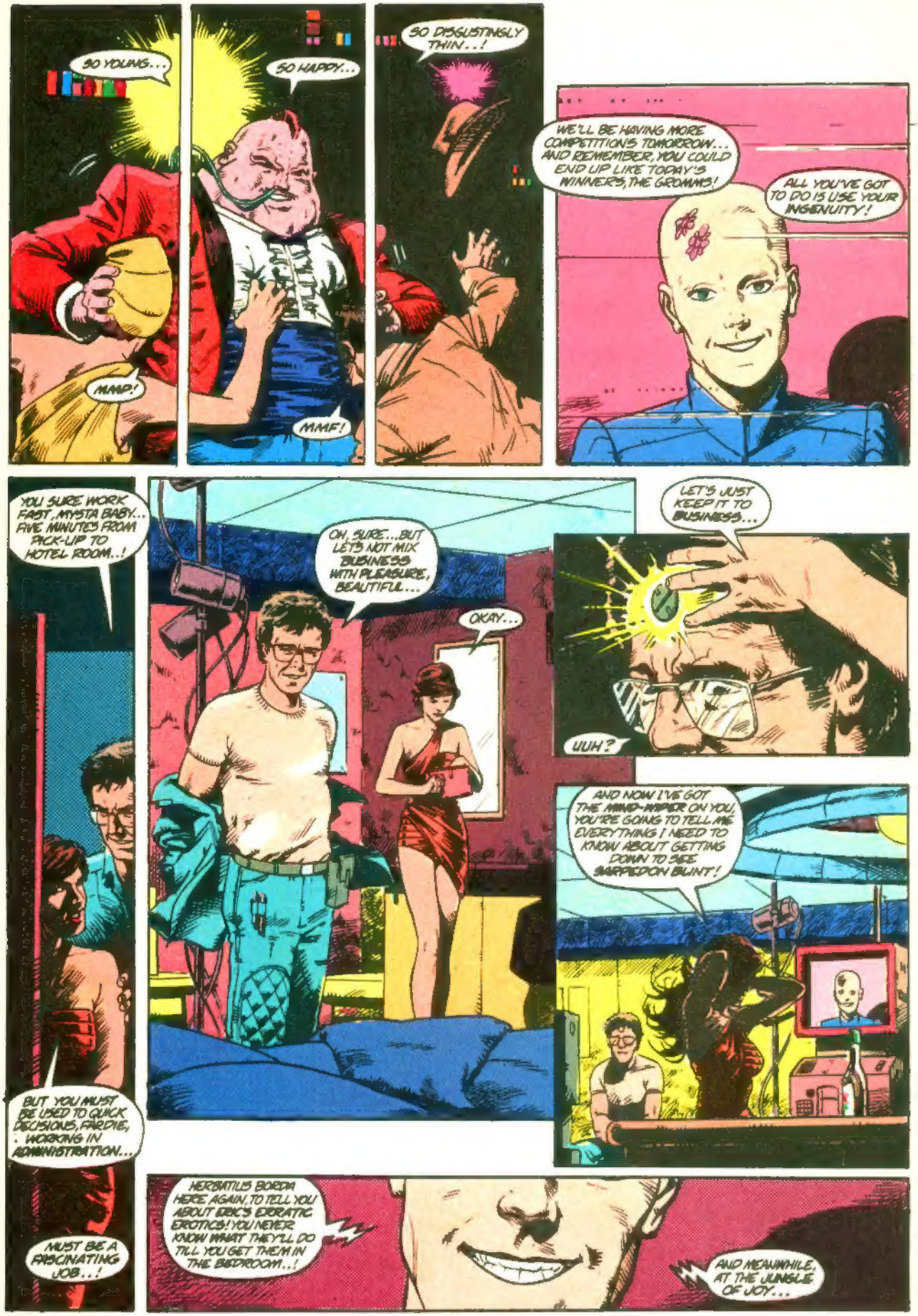
SCRIPT: PEDRO HENRY ART: STEVE DILLON COLOURS: RON COURTNEY EDITOR: DEZ SKINN

KLEMOND
SO, MY HIRELINGS REPORT THAT MYSTA AND HER TIN BOYFRIEND HAVE REACHED QABAB....
AND THAT THEY'VE STOPPED BARONET'S MEC-TEC. THEY'RE DOING BETTER THAN I EXPECTED...
STILL, EVEN IF THEY KNEW WHERE I WAS, IT'D TAKE THEM A COUPLE OF DAYS TO GET HERE...
WHICH GIVES ME TIME TO PREPARE SOMETHING... SOMETHING VICIOUS!
LEMANYA? WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?
OH, JUST WONDERING, SIRE DONTHAX... WONDERING WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ZIRK SINCE HE RAN OFF AND LEFT US...
ZIRK? FORGET THE LITTLE BEAST! FORGET EVERYTHING EXCEPT THAT YOU'RE MINE, BODY AND SOUL!
BODY, ANYWAY... WHO CARES ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE! COME INSIDE!
LISTEN, MYSTA... NOW THAT WE'RE HERE IN THIS PLEASURE PALACE, WHY DON'T WE FORGET DONTHAX FOR A FEW DAYS AND HAVE SOME FUN?
EVERYONE ELSE IS...
MY IDEA OF FUN'S GUTTING DONTHAX..!
HI, I'M DRUNK!


HAVE YOU GOT ANYTHING BETTER IN MIND?
WELL, MAYBE NOT, HONEY... BUT IT'S BEEN QUITE A WHILE SINCE I GOT MY BUTTON PRES—
HEY, LOOK! OVER THERE WITH THAT BLIND GUY... A BUBBLE-BELLY! I AIN'T SEEN ONE OF THEM IN YEARS!
NO, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE...
A BUBBLE-BELLY?
QUICK, AXEL, OUT OF SIGHT! IT'S ZIRK!
ZIRK! WHO THE HELL'S HE?
HE WAS DONTHAX'S LAST CLIENT BEFORE I WIPED OUT THE DENDRELLIAN ASSASSINS! GENOCIDE JOB...
WANTED EVERY OTHER BUBBLE BELLY IN THE GALAXY WIPED OUT, EXCEPT FOR HIMSELF...
CRAZY BOZO... MUSTA RUINED HIS SEX-LIFE...
"DOESN'T NEED ANYONE ELSE... THEY REPRODUCE BY FISSION. SPLIT INTO EIGHT, EVERY FOUR YEARS... ZIRK WANTED TO REPOPULATE THE UNIVERSE WITH COPIES OF HIMSELF..."
BEFORE I TAKE YOU TO MISTER BLINT, I'M AFRAID I'LL HAVE TO FEEL YOU FOR WEAPONS, SIR...
YEAH! YEAH!
"BUT ZIRK AND DONTHAX WERE CLOSE, SO WE MIGHT HAVE OUR FIRST REAL LEAD... AND IF HE'S GOING TO SEE SARPEDON BLINT, THE GUY WHO OWNS THIS PLACE..."
EUUURH!
I THINK YOU'LL PASS, MISTER ZIRK... SO IF YOU'LL JUST WAIT FOR THE LIFT...
WHO ATE YOUR EYEBALLS, HANDSOME?
I THINK I'M GOING TO HAVE TO GET DOWN THERE TO LEVEL ONE AND SEE THIS MAN MYSELF!
UH, YEAH, BUT MYSTA, Y'KNOW... I DON'T THINK I...


JUNGLE OF JOY
UH, LIKE... MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DRAGGED ME INTO THIS DOORWAY..!
I MEAN... I... I...
YAARGH! RIGELLIAN RED BLOOMS! BAOBABS! SPICAN SPITTING TREES! SPANISH MOSS! DURIANS! GRASS!
KILL! KILL! KILL!
OH GOOD GOD...
AND HERE THEY ARE, THE WINNERS OF OUR NEWLY-WEDS COMPETITION, SHALTI AND FELIX GROMM!
AND THEIR PRIZE, COURTESY OF THE OASIS ADMINISTRATION... TO MEET SARPEDON BLUNT III!
HMM...
OOO, FELIX! I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS HAPPENING TO US!
NOR ME, SHALTI HONEY!
BUT I WONDER WHY WE'RE BEING STEERED AROUND BY BLIND MEN?
157
ALL MISTER BLUNT'S PERSONAL ASSISTANTS ARE BLIND, SIR...
BUT I'M NOT!
HELLO, LONG LEGS! HUBBA HUBBA!
WANNA HUG SOMETHING SLIPPERY?
FELIX?
WHY NOT LAY DOWN ON THE FLOOR AND LET ME TRAMPLE ALL OVER YOUR SOFT, SQUIRMING BODY?
FELIX!!

EVER DONE IT IN CUSTARD?
RUDGEWICK. THE ANIMAL NET.
I'LL GET YOU FOR THIS, PORK-BOY!
I'LL DUNK YOUR LIVING BRAIN IN ACID!
I'LL...
PHEW! THANK HEAVEN HE'S OUT OF THE WAY!
LET'S GET ON AND MEET MISTER BLINT! I HEAR HE'S ASTONISHINGLY HANDSOME!
SO I'M TOLD, MISS... YOU'LL FIND HIM IN THE NULL GRAV AREA AT THE END OF THE CORRIDOR...
NULL-GRAV?
INDEED, YOUNG SIR... I FIND IT NECESSARY FOR MY CONTINUED EXISTENCE...
YEARS OF GOOD LIVING HAVE GIVEN ME A SLIGHT WEIGHT PROBLEM...
FELIX... HE... HE...
BUT ENOUGH OF ME! I MUST CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR MARRIAGE! WHY, IF YOU'RE WED ON CAMUS, I FEEL LIKE THE FATHER OF THE BRIDE!
LET ME EMBRACE YOU!


SO YUMMY...
SO HAPPY...
SO DISGUSTINGLY THIN..!
MMM!
MMF!
WE'LL BE HAVING MORE COMPETITIONS TOMORROW... AND REMEMBER, YOU COULD END UP LIKE TODAY'S WINNERS, THE GROMMETS!
ALL YOU'VE GOT TO DO IS USE YOUR INGENUITY!
YOU SURE WORK FAST, MYSTA BABY... FIVE MINUTES FROM PICK-UP TO HOTEL ROOM..!
OH, SURE...BUT LET'S NOT MIX BUSINESS WITH PLEASURE, BEAUTIFUL...
OKAY...
LET'S JUST KEEP IT TO BUSINESS...
UUH?
AND NOW I'VE GOT THE MIND-WIPER ON YOU, YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GETTING DOWN TO SEE SARPEDON BLUNT!
BUT YOU MUST BE USED TO QUICK DECISIONS, FARDIE, . WORKING IN ADMINISTRATION...
MUST BE A FASCINATING JOB..!
HERBATIUS BORDA HERE AGAIN, TO TELL YOU ABOUT ERIC'S ERRATIC EROTICS! YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT THEY'LL DO TILL YOU GET THEM IN THE BEDROOM..!
AND MEANWHILE, AT THE JUNGLE OF JOY...

LEAVES! THOUSANDS OF LEAVES! GAAAH!
PLEASE, MISTER! I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TELL YOU FOR THE LAST HALF HOUR... EVERYTHING IN HERE'S SYNTHETIC!!
ALL OUR PLANTS ARE PLASTIC!
PLASTIC!
OH...
YEAH, WELL... UH... SORRY, FELLA...
JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS, I GUESS...
SEE YA...
KNOWING MYSTA, SHE'LL PROBABLY HAVE FOUND SOME WAY TO GET DOWN AND SEE THIS BLINT GUY BY NOW...
AND THERE'S NO WAY I'M GOING TO GET THROUGH HIS SECURITY WITH THIS BACON-SLICER...
SO IF I'M GOING TO HELP OUT, I GUESS I'M JUST GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE THE DEVIOUS ROUTE...
LOWER YOUR STATUS! REMEMBER, ON CABIN THE LOWEST FLOOR LEVELS HAVE THE HIGHEST CLASS, THE HIGHEST PRICE! SO DROP A FEW LEVELS! EVERYONE'S DOING IT!
THESE CREDENTIALS FEEL ALRIGHT, MISS... BUT I'M AFRAID I'M STILL GOING TO HAVE TO CARRY OUT A WEAPONS CHECK...
SO, IF YOU'LL JUST KEEP PERFECTLY STILL, WE'LL START AT THE TOP...
YOU'VE AN EXCELLENT COMPLEXION, MY DEAR...
VERY SOFT SKIN...
DELIGHTFULLY SOFT...

A PLEASURE TO GIVE YOU THE OKAY, MY DEAR
I'M SURE IT WAS...
OH, DON'T BE OFFENDED.. YOU'D BE SURPRISED THE THINGS PEOPLE WITH GRUDGES TRY TO SMUGGLE PAST ME...
NEEDLE-GUNS.. RAZOR-WRAPPERS... ONCE HAD A GIRL WITH A FALSE HAND FULL OF EXPLOSIVES..
HE KILLED THEM ALL... I'VE GOT A HUNDRED PER CENT RECORD...
REALLY? WELL, SORRY ABOUT THIS..
SORRY?
SURE... YOUR RECORD JUST GOT SPOILED.
STILL, IT ONLY HURTS..
WHEN I TWIST IT!
GUUUH!
LEVEL ONE...
..SO NOW LET'S SEE WHAT SORT OF POINT I CAN MAKE WITH BARPEDON BLUNT III

SARPEDON BLUNT III?
NO OTHER, MY DEAR...
THE POINT IS...
WHO ARE YOU?
MY QUESTIONS FIRST...
AH, BUT WHY WASTE YOUR LAST MOMENTS WITH WEARISOME QUERIES?
FOR NOW THAT YOU'VE SEEN ME AS I REALLY AM...
I SHALL BE FORCED TO KILL YOU...
AND BELIEVE ME, MY FRAGILE BEAUTY...
THE PLEASURE WILL BE ALL MINE...!

WELL, COME ON, GIRL...
SCREAM... SQUIRM... STRUGGLE...
THERE'S NOTHING TO BE GAINED BY CRINGING...
AND SURELY EVEN ONE AS SKELETAL AS YOU MUST HAVE SOME SPARK OF LIFE TO...
RAM IT, BLINT!
AH, GOOD! GOOD!
BUT NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU'RE USED TO NULL-GRAV...
OR HOW GYMNASTIC YOU ARE...
ONCE THIS DOOR IS CLOSED...
FAT WILL PREVAIL!
AND THERE IS NO ONE WHO CAN SAVE YOU!
AIN'T USED THE OL' BOOT-MAGNETS IN AGES! HELL, COMES TO THINK OF IT... AIN'T EVER USED 'EM AT ALL!
IT'S LIKE WADING THROUGH MOLASSES!
NEVER THOUGHT IT'D TAKE SO LONG TO WALK DOWN THE OUTSIDE OF A SPACE-STATION...

A PIN? WONDERFUL...!
WHAT DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DO? BURST?
YOW!
CLEVER..
BUT YOU'VE ONLY ONE PIN...
AND I'VE GOT TWO HANDS..!
AND NO MATTER HOW ANGRY THAT MAKES YOU...
THROWING THINGS WON'T HELP!
AH, I SEE...
YOU WERE AIMING AT THE DOOR CONTROL...
BUT EVEN IF YOU HIT...
O.D.C.
G.C.
IT'D BE FOUR TOO LATE!
FAR, FOUR TOO-
NO!!
YOU'VE TURNED THE GRAVITY ON, YOU STUPID SQUAWKING SQUAW!
TURN IT OFF AGAIN AT ONCE, YOU SKINNY LITTLE ANIMAL!
DON'T YOU REALISE...
OF COURSE I REALISE, BLUNT... YOU'RE GOING TO COLLAPSE UNDER YOUR OWN BODY-WEIGHT IN THREE OR FOUR MINUTES...
SO LET'S GET STRAIGHT ON WITH QUESTION TIME...

VWEEP! VWEEP!
WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S THE ALARM FROM MISTER BLINT'S ROOM! THE GRAVITY'S ON!
ARM YOURSELVES . QUICKLY!
THE DOOR'S CLOSED TOO! WE MIGHT NEED..
CUTTING GEAR..!
HA...ONE SLASH AND THE RUSH OF AIR OPENS UP THE WHOLE WALL FOR ME...
SO NOW ALL I GOTTA DO IS WAIT FOR THE ROOM TO...
EMPTY?
YIIIAAGH!
THAT'S WHAT I LIKE ABOUT THIS JOB...
SOMETHING NEW EVERY DAY!
I'LL HAVE YOU KILLED... MY MEN...
OBVIOUSLY WON'T GET HERE . SO YOU'VE GOT TWO CHOICES...
TALK FAST... OR DIE SLOW.

TOLD YOU ALL I KNOW ABOUT ARTERIUS DONTHAX IS OLD STUFF FROM YEARS AGO! NOW PLEASE...
OH, GOD I CAN FEEL MY BONES CRACKING...
LISTEN... IN A CUBICLE.. AT THE END OF THE CORRIDOR UHHH THAT'S WHERE YOU'LL FIND ZIRK
UH HE MIGHT KNOW SOMETHING OH, PLEASE PLEASE TURN THE . GRAVITY. OFF
I I DON'T WANT TO DIE
STIFFS...!
A WHOLE CLOSETFUL OF STIFFS!
BUT IF MYSTA CAME DOWN HERE, AND... AND .
AND IF THAT'S WHAT HAS HAPPENED THERE'LL BE ONE HELLUVA LOT MORE DEAD BOYS AROUND HERE BEFORE LONG!
MAYBE I'D BETTER CHECK IT OUT FIRST, AND .
DON'T BOTHER, AXEL I'M OKAY
MYSTA!

HEY, LISTEN BABE THIS GUY BLINT'S SOME KINDA PSYCHO! I MEAN, HE AIN'T KINDA CUDDLY LIKE I AM HE'S REALLY SICK!
I THINK I THINK MAYBE I SHOULD WIPE MY CLEAVER ON HIS LIVER!
GO AHEAD AXEL
I DON'T THINK HE'S GONNA TO COMPLAIN...
THEN HE DIDN'T TRY TO
OH, SURE HE DID. I THINK HE HAD QUITE A CRUSH ON ME
BUT I HAD TO LET HIM DOWN...
THEN OUR LEAD'S RUN OUT I GUESS
OH, NOT REALLY IT'S LIKE THEY SAY
ONE DOOR CLOSES
ANOTHER OPENS
BLINT, THE ROT-BRAINED, POX-BODIED DOUBLE-DYED BAST —
SNORK! MYSTA MYSTRALIS!
CUT HIM LOOSE, AXEL
YA WANNA SQUEEZE ME TILL I POP GREEN EYES?
NO
I DIDN'T WANT TO HAVE TO TAKE A WASH, EITHER
A WASH? HEY, YOU LOOKING FOR A BATH-TOY ANGEL? WE COULD
M LOOKING FOR DONTHAX YOU'RE GOING TO LEAD ME TO HIM
WHAT YOU OFFERING, WRIGGLY?

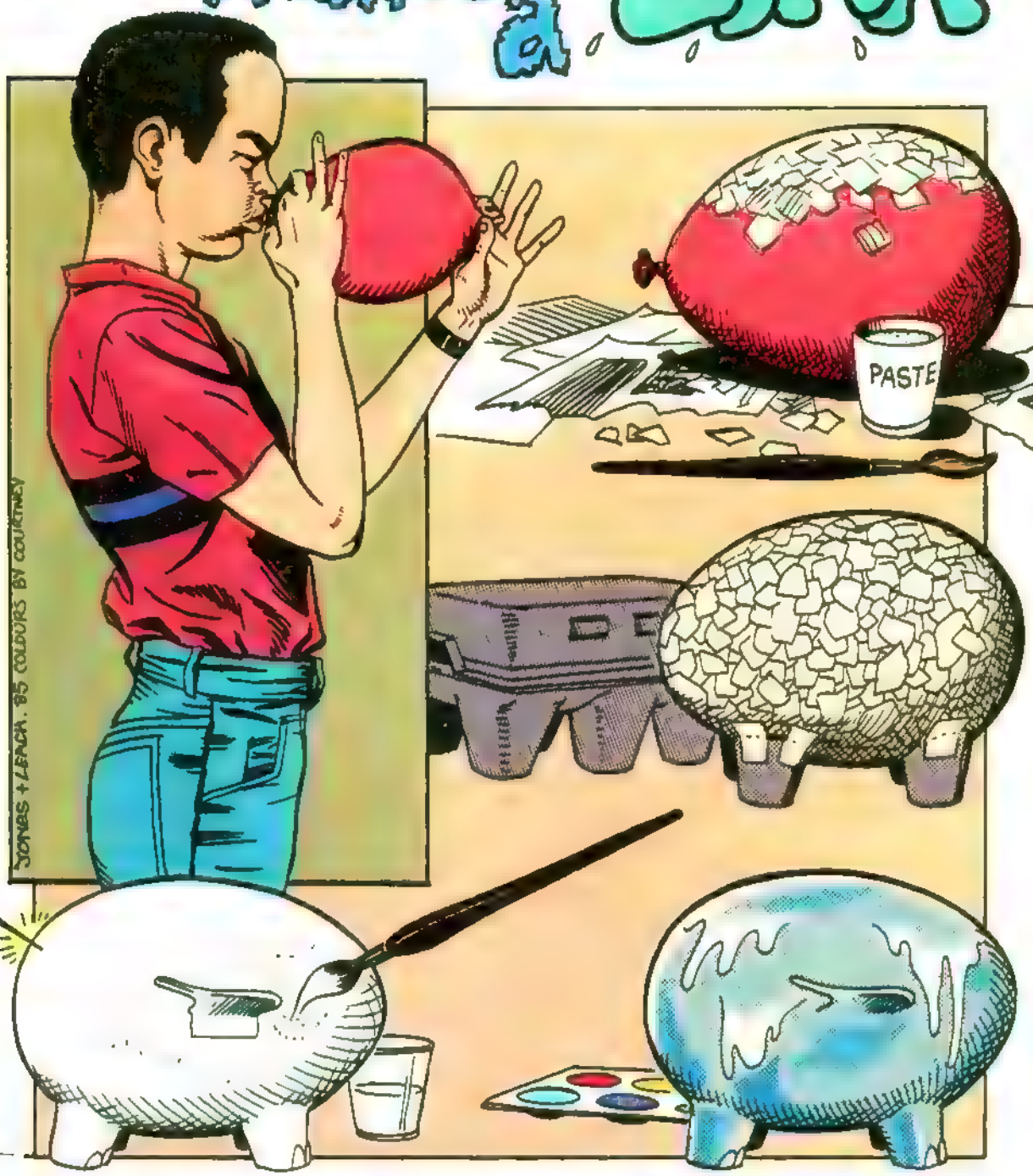
NOW ME, I COULD REALLY GO FOR YOU IN—
NO DEALS, SCUMBAG
LEAD OR BLEED...
WE HOPE YOU'VE ENJOYED YOUR SLICE OF LIFE ON OASIS FOLKS WE'RE SORRY YOU'RE CUTTING OUT...
BAGS ALL PACKED? BILLS ALL PAID? THEN COME BACK SOON FOR MORE GOOD TIMES ..
COURTESY OF SARPEDON BLINT IV!
WELL SO WHAT IF YOU DON'T USUALLY USE A HOT-WATER BOTTLE?
JUST COOL OFF AND GET ABOARD SHIP ZIRK
UH YEAH MYSTA ABOUT THE SHIP
LET'S TAKE THIS ONE INSTEAD HUH?
BUT IT ISN'T YOURS IS IT?
AND THERE'S A SECURITY GUARD...
SO?
SO THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY
THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY

KLEMONO? AIN'T THAT KIND OF A BACKWATER WORLD FOR A BOZO LIKE DONTHAX TO HANG OUT?
STILL, NOW WE KNOW WHERE HE'S
NO, IT'S JUST THE SORT OF PLACE HE'D CHOOSE WHERE HE CAN BE TOTALLY ANONYMOUS
WE DON'T NEED BALLOON-BOY ANY MORE!
YOINKS!
NICE IDEA, AXEL BUT WE'LL STILL NEED HIM TO GUIDE US AROUND WHEN WE GET PLANET-SIDE
I'D KISS YOU FOR THAT, SWEETY, IF ONLY..
WANNA KISS ME, INSTEAD?
NO
COME ON AXEL LET'S SEE WHAT KIND OF CABINS THIS SHIP'S GOT! I COULD DO WITH A FEW HOURS REST AND RELAXATION
BZZZZT!
AROOOGAH!
MAYBE THE BLAZZGLABBING BUTTON'LL BREAK AND ELECTROCUTE THE MICROCEPHALIC METAL MORON!
19:51
SQUAK OFF, SQUIRT!
HEY YOU'VE CHANGED!
AND YOU DIDN'T LET ME WATCH!

LEAVE HIM BE, AXEL THAT MUDBALL UP AHEAD'S KLEMOND...
[illegible]T IN HELL, BIG FEET! I HOPE THE MEC-TEC [illegible] YOU!
FAT CHANCE RUNT! I LEFT THAT PLASTIC PEABRAIN IN A HUNDRED PIECES BACK ON OASIS, IN
PRESS
LISTEN, HONEY, Y'KNOW NEVER PAY FOR ANYTHING OUTRIGHT! T'S GOTTA BE A BET...
AND I BET SOMEONE N HERE GETS KILLED IN THE NEXT FIVE MINUTES
BUT, MORT YOU KNOW BILL DOESN'T ALLOW WEAPONS IN HERE SINCE THAT LAST FIGHT, SO
WHAT S THAT NOISE FROM THE GATEPOST?
SKIRP!
SKRUTCH!
GARB—
—UUKK!!
MORT?
GUESS I WIN AGAIN
COMPULOG
RESTRUCTURING COMPLETED
TARGETS MYSTA MYSTRALIS
AXEL DRESSBUTTON
RESUMING PURSUIT

TO BE CONTINUED...

How to make a ZIRK



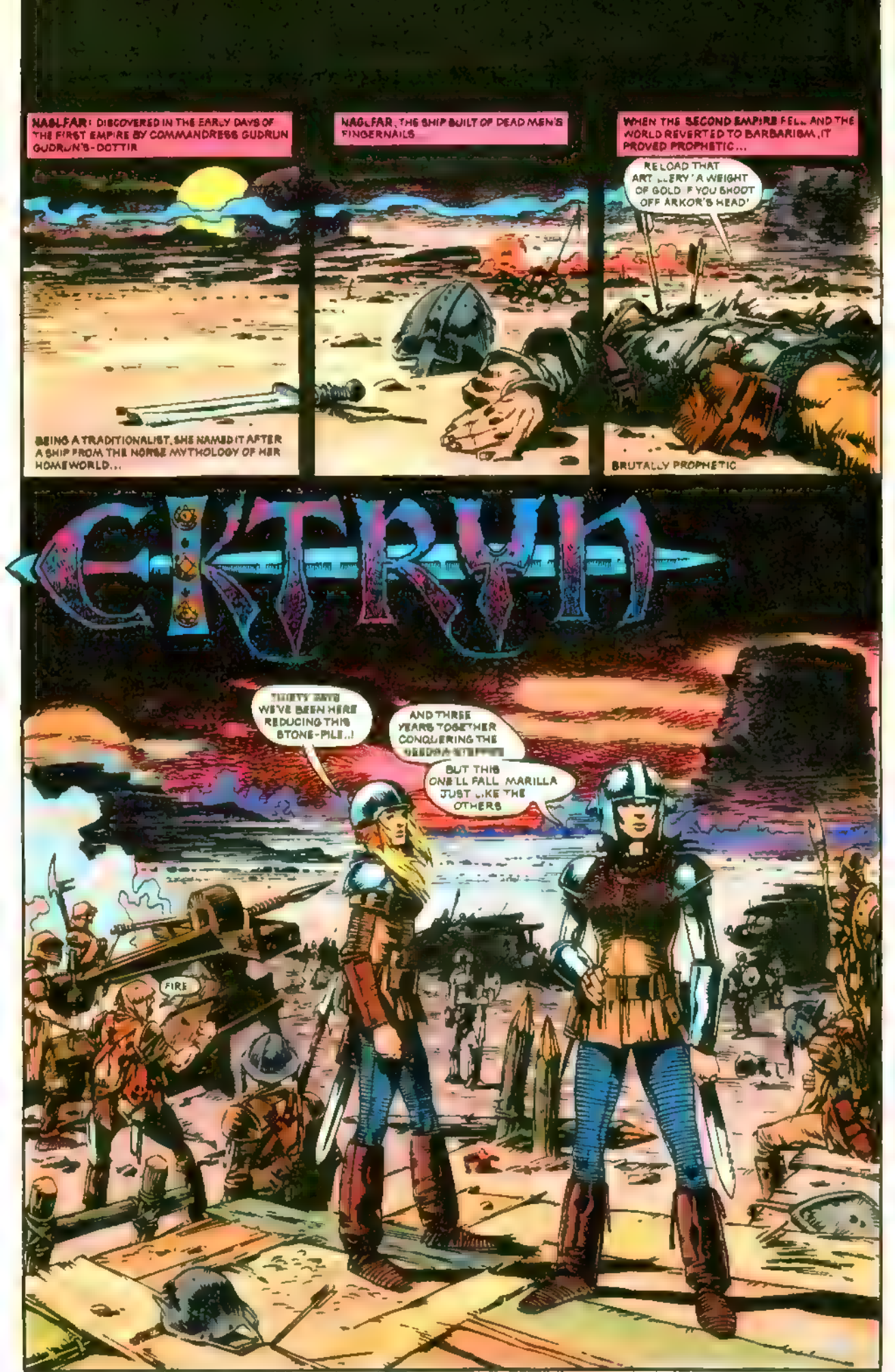
To make a Zirk you will require: a newspaper, wallpaper paste, a balloon, an eggbox, a brush and some Polyfilla.

1. First inflate the balloon. Then rip the newspaper into tiny bits and soak them in paste. Cover the balloon with them and build up several layers.

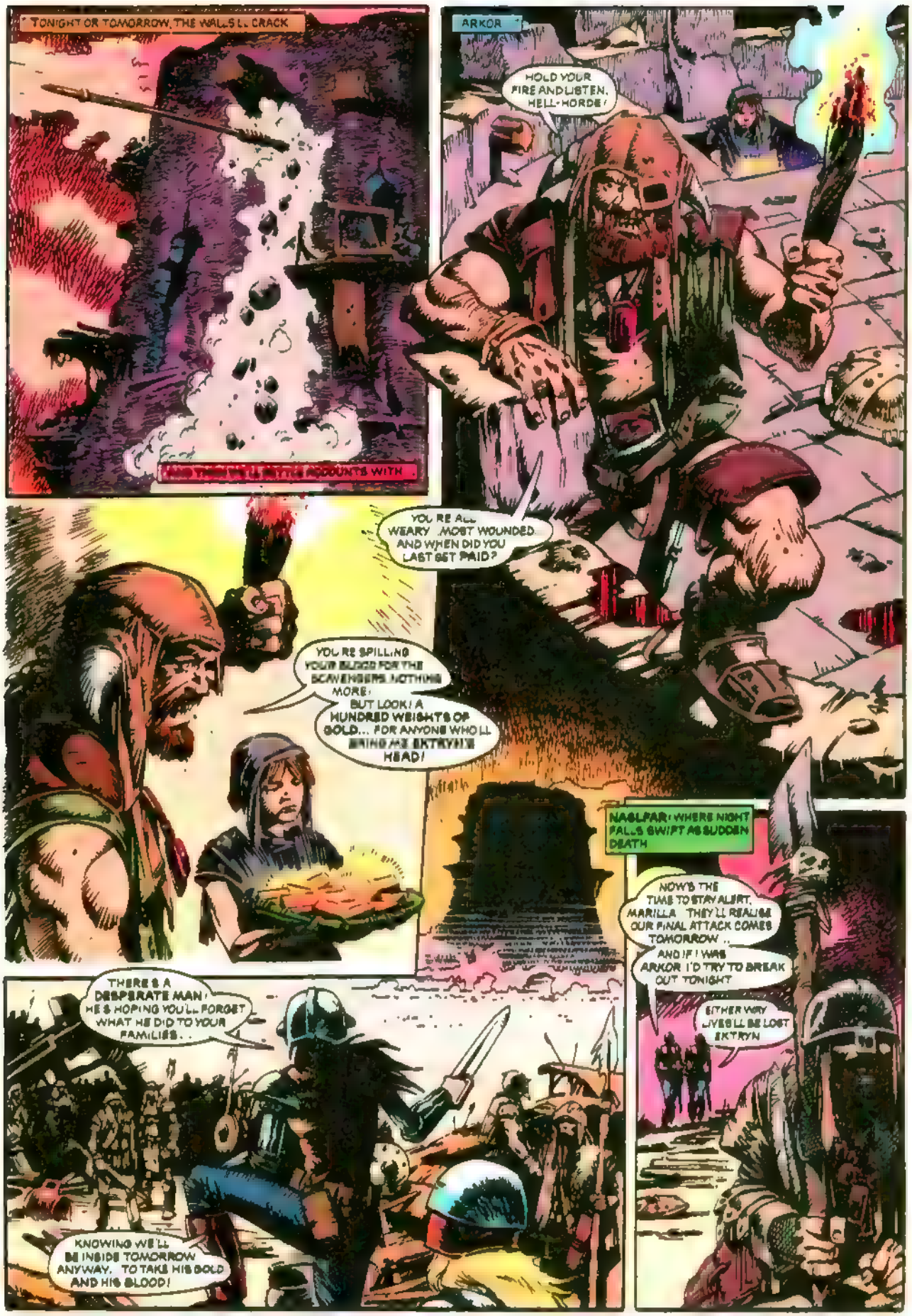
2. To make Zirk's legs, cut four sections off an eggbox and stick them onto the body with some more paste-soaked paper. Keep sticking pieces down till you have achieved a smooth join.

3. The balloon is now useless so burst it with a pin. Next, mix up a dish of thin Polyfilla and spread it over Zirk. Try and make the surface as smooth as possible. Cut out some small paper wings and toe-nails, then stick them onto the still damp Polyfilla. Leave to dry

4. Now paint Zirk silver or any other bilious colour you desire. For a realistic sweat sheen, drip thick beads of drying clear varnish onto the finished model. Finally store Zirk in a safe dark place away from females and any long thrashing objects


NAGLFAR: DISCOVERED IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE FIRST EMPIRE BY COMMANDRESS GUDRUN GUDRUN'S-DOTTIR
BEING A TRADITIONALIST, SHE NAMED IT AFTER A SHIP FROM THE NORSE MYTHOLOGY OF HER HOMEWORLD...
NAGLFAR. THE SHIP BUILT OF DEAD MEN'S FINGERNAILS
WHEN THE SECOND EMPIRE FELL AND THE WORLD REVERTED TO BARBARISM, IT PROVED PROPHETIC...
RELOAD THAT ART...ERY! A WEIGHT OF GOLD IF YOU SHOOT OFF ARKOR'S HEAD!
BRUTALLY PROPHETIC
CYCLOPS
THIRTY DAYS WE'VE BEEN HERE REDUCING THIS STONE-PILE..!
AND THREE YEARS TOGETHER CONQUERING THE [illegible]
BUT THIS ONE'LL FALL MARILLA JUST LIKE THE OTHERS
FIRE

SCRIPT: PEDRO HENRY ART: CAM KENNEDY COLOURS: RON COURTNEY

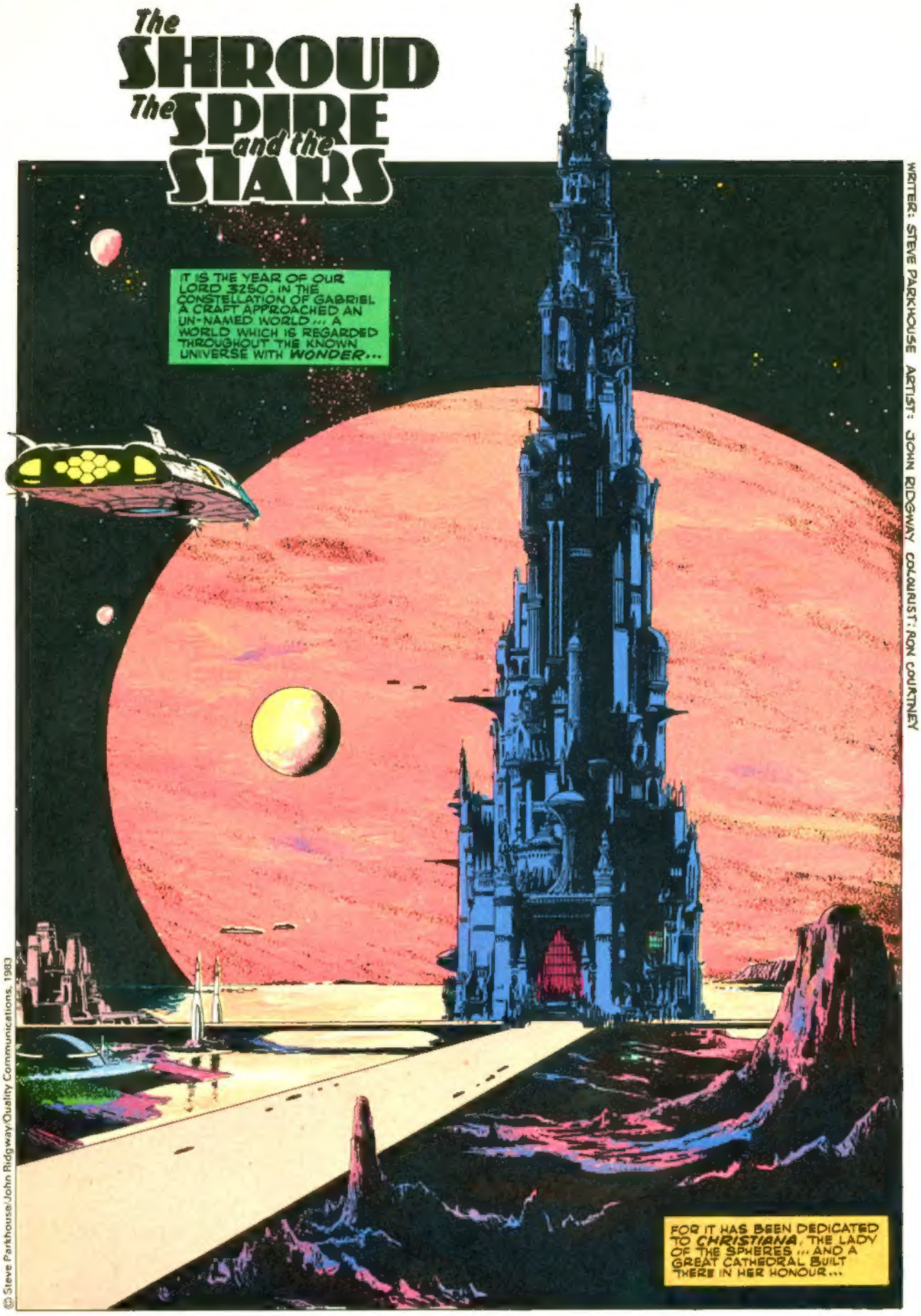

TONIGHT OR TOMORROW, THE WALLS'LL CRACK
AND THEN WE'LL SETTLE ACCOUNTS WITH...
ARKOR
HOLD YOUR FIRE AND LISTEN, HELL-HORDE!
YOU'RE ALL WEARY, MOST WOUNDED AND WHEN DID YOU LAST GET PAID?
YOU'RE SPILLING YOUR BLOOD FOR THE SCAVENGERS NOTHING MORE!
BUT LOOK! A HUNDRED WEIGHTS OF GOLD... FOR ANYONE WHO'LL BRING ME SKTRYN'S HEAD!
NAGLFAR: WHERE NIGHT FALLS SWIFT AS SUDDEN DEATH
NOW'S THE TIME TO STAY ALERT, MARILLA. THEY'LL REALISE OUR FINAL ATTACK COMES TOMORROW...
AND IF I WAS ARKOR I'D TRY TO BREAK OUT TONIGHT
EITHER WAY LIVES'LL BE LOST
THERE'S A DESPERATE MAN! HE'S HOPING YOU'LL FORGET WHAT HE DID TO YOUR FAMILIES...
KNOWING WE'LL BE INSIDE TOMORROW ANYWAY. TO TAKE HIS GOLD AND HIS BLOOD!

YOU CAN TELL BY THE WAY THE SCAVENGER-BLIMPS ARE GATHERING
I HATE THOSE THINGS
THE WHISPERERS IN THE DARKNESS I WONDER WHY THEY ONLY FIND THEIR VOICES AT NIGHTFALL
STILL TOMORROW WE'LL MOVE ON AND LEAVE THEM BEHIND
DOUBLE THE WATCH ALL ROUND THE CAMP MARLA AND MAKE SURE EVERYONE'S GOT LIGHTS
RIGHT NOW I NEED A FEW HOURS SLEEP
CALL ME IMMEDIATELY IF THERE'S
NASLFAR WHERE THE DARKNESS WHISPERS SILKY AND CONVINCING
WOULDN'T YOU RATHER DIE YOUNG EKTRYN?
WOULDN'T THAT BE THE BEST THING?
BLIMP
THINK OF THE PAIN YOU'D AVOID THE LOSS OF FRIENDS . OF HONOUR ..
WOUNDS ILLNESS.. OLD AGE
I'M NOT READY TO DIE YET
NOT TILL I'VE SETTLED WITH ARKOR DONTIR AND ALL THE OTHER WARLORDS WHO'VE MADE THIS WORLD HELL!
HELL. WHAT'S THE POINT OF LIVING? WHY NOT DIE?
THAT'D BE USEFUL...

AS FOOD FOR YOU, VERMIN? GET OUT OF HERE OFFAL-SPAWN!
THERE'LL BE MEAT ENOUGH FOR YOUR KIND TOMORROW
NAGLFAR: WHERE SLEEP IS SHORT WAKING WILL
EKTRYN! ARKOR'S TROOPS ARE IN THE CAMP! WE'RE BEING SLAUGHTERED!
WHAT?
WHERE'S MARILLA? WHAT HAPPENED TO THE DOUBLE WATCH?
DOUBLE WATCH? YOU REDUCED IT
POX! I DID! FIRE THE SOUTHERN TENTS
THEN GATHER EVERYONE YOU CAN TO ATTACK THE R FLANK FROM THE NORTH
JUST WHAT I'D HAVE DONE, EKTRYN
I MIGHT SAVE YOUR TROOPS
BUT IT WON'T SAVE YOU!
NAGLFAR: WHERE THE AVERAGE SINGLE COMBAT

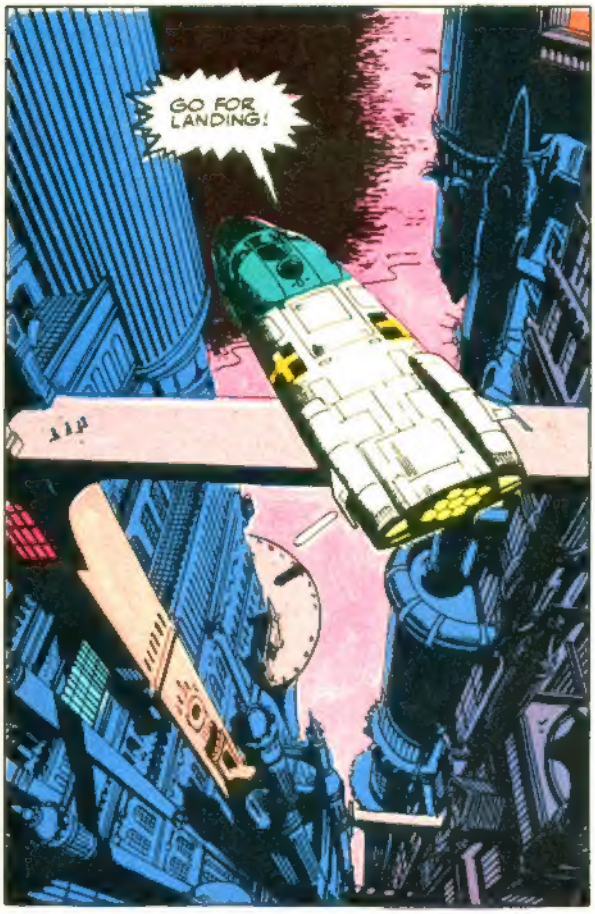
LASTS EIGHT AND A HALF SECONDS
UHH
MARILLA? WHY?
WHY?
A HUNDRED WEIGHTS OF GOLD EKTRYN
YOU WOULD HAVE SHARED IT WITH EVERYBODY
BUT THAT WOULD HAVE BROUGHT ME SAFETY IN THIS HELL-HOLE WORLD
INSTEAD
IT HURTS, EKTRYN
IT
NAGLFAR
WOULDN'T YOU RATHER DIE YOUNG, EKTRYN?
WOULDN'T THAT BE THE BEST THING, ?

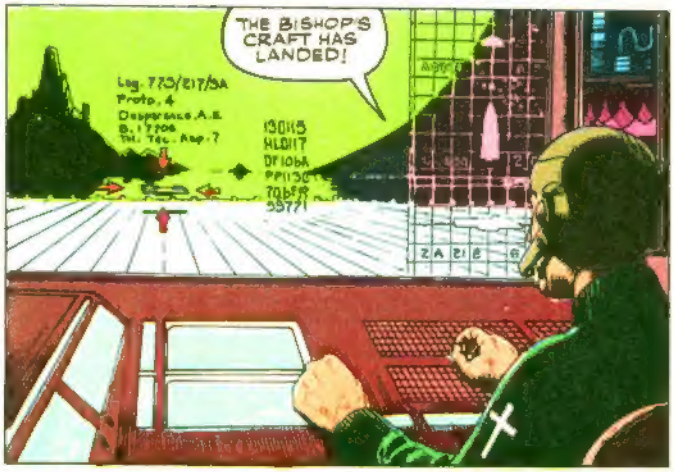
The SHROUD The SPIRE and the STARS


IT IS THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 3250. IN THE CONSTELLATION OF GABRIEL A CRAFT APPROACHED AN UN-NAMED WORLD... A WORLD WHICH IS REGARDED THROUGHOUT THE KNOWN UNIVERSE WITH WONDER...
FOR IT HAS BEEN DEDICATED TO CHRISTIANA, THE LADY OF THE SPHERES... AND A GREAT CATHEDRAL BUILT THERE IN HER HONOUR...

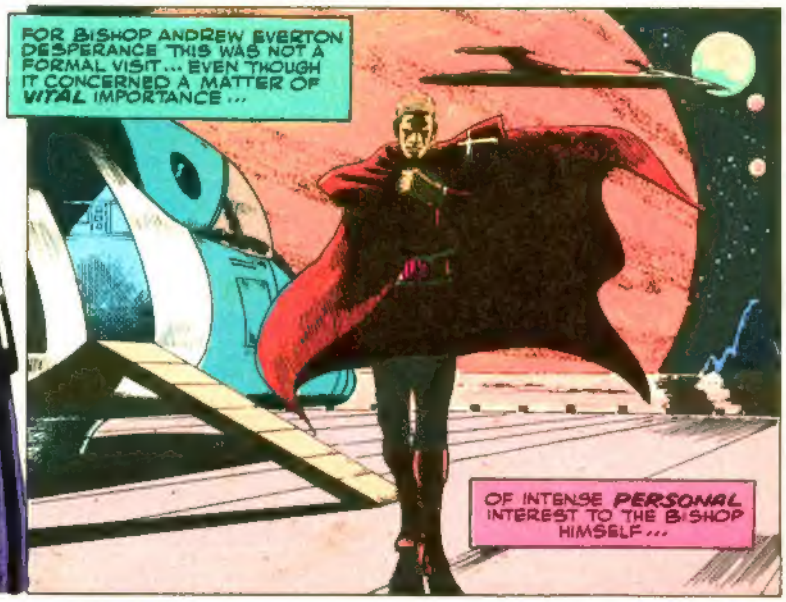
WRITER: STEVE PARKHOUSE ARTIST: JOHN RIDGWAY COLOURIST: RON COURTNEY

© Steve Parkhouse/John Ridgway/Quality Communications, 1983


GO FOR LANDING!


THE BISHOP'S CRAFT HAS LANDED!

SHOW HIM INTO THE MAIN HALL... I WILL RECEIVE HIM THERE...


FOR BISHOP ANDREW EVERTON DESPERANCE THIS WAS NOT A FORMAL VISIT... EVEN THOUGH IT CONCERNED A MATTER OF VITAL IMPORTANCE...
OF INTENSE PERSONAL INTEREST TO THE BISHOP HIMSELF...

WELCOME, YOUR GRACE ... HOW WAS THE FLIGHT?
FINE, RAFE ... JUST FINE. HOW ARE THINGS DEVELOPING?
AS YOU CAN SEE, YOUR GRACE ... WE HAVE BEGUN WORK ALREADY...
THAT'S EXCELLENT NEWS, RAFE ... A PRIVILEGE I COULD HAVE NEVER DREAMED OF.
THE SHROUD OF TURIN!!

TELL ME ... WHERE EXACTLY WAS IT FOUND?
ON ONE OF THE OLD WORLDS, YOUR GRACE ... BEING GUARDED BY THE FAITHFUL FEW, AS EVER...
WHAT ARE THE CHANCES OF SUCCESS IN THIS MATTER, RAFE?
WE HAVE THE BEST PEOPLE WORKING ON IT ...
SOME VERY GOOD SAMPLES WERE TAKEN ... EXTRAORDINARILY WELL PRESERVED CONSIDERING THE HUGE TIME SPAN INVOLVED...
CELLULAR REGENERATION HAS VIRTUALLY BEGUN ...
IT FRIGHTENS ME, RAFE ... WHAT IN THE DEAR LORDS NAME SHALL WE DO NOW?
WE SIMPLY SIT BACK, YOUR GRACE ...
AND AWAIT THE SECOND COMING!

The End.